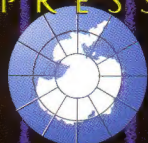


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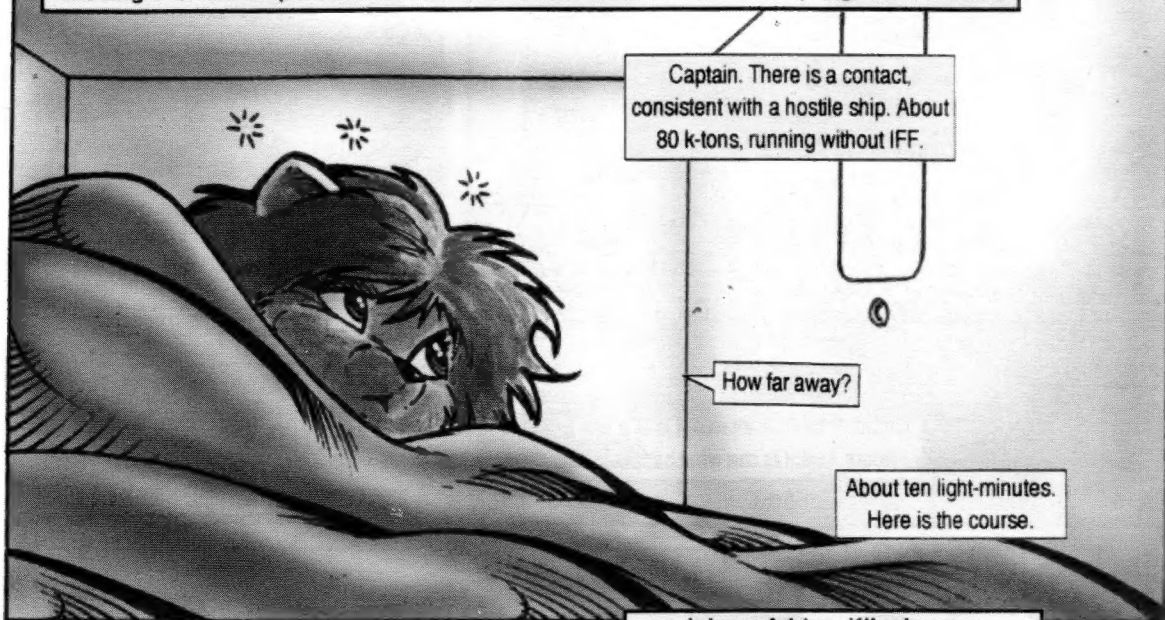


No. 1



ADRIAN 96

**Erma Felna, EDF** SD 201-02-27 For nearly two months, Erma Felna has been chasing the ILR ships that bombarded her Homeworld, without any sign of success.



Captain. There is a contact, consistent with a hostile ship. About 80 k-tons, running without IFF.

How far away?

About ten light-minutes.  
Here is the course.

Inks - Adrian Klienbergen  
Script, pencils, tones - S.A.Gallacci



I'm coming up.

Get some intercept solutions together. Best and worst for available fuel. I also want six ACVs, with warheads, configured for enhanced radiation.

Warheads?

Yes. Launch them ASAP. fastest intercept with a recovery profile.



While I'll want everything you can get on that ship, keep looking for anyone else in system too.

Six days later.

Captain? Time to rotate the watch.

Umph. First ACV intercept is in a few hours. I want to see what happens.

And make sure the ACVs know to break off if the target's status changes.

Has there been anything?

No, Captain.

Other than some short-range radar, the ship hasn't done anything.

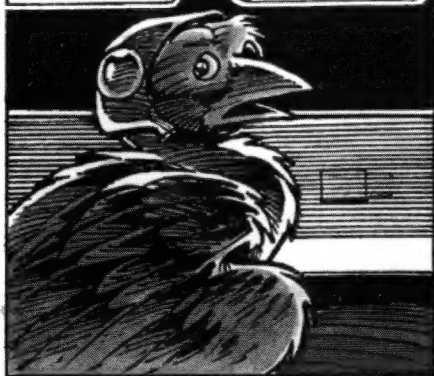
Well, transmit a last series of warnings and then see what happens.

Yes, Captain.

One minute to impact.

Still no reaction.

Wait! Gravimetrics is showing something.



Yes. I think the ship self-destructed.

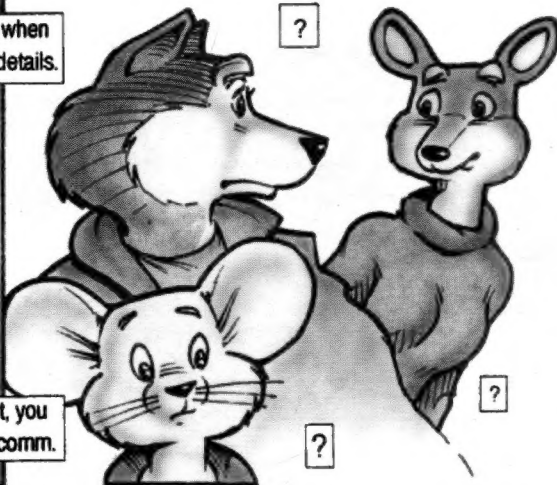
See the mass-event spike. And now, how the mass-target is dispersing.

In about eight minutes we'll know for sure



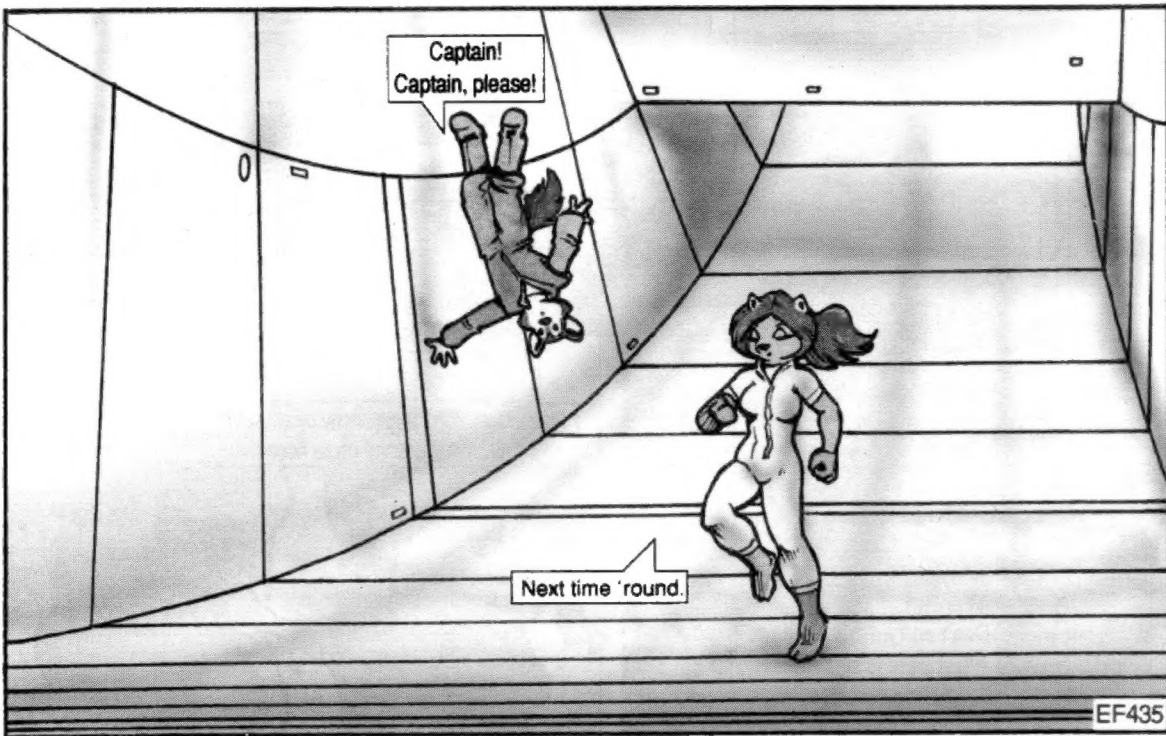
Let me know when you have the details.

Pxaannet, you have the comm.



Captain! Captain, please!

Next time 'round.





Yes?

Yes, Captain. It looks like the ship used two nukes to self-destruct.

The ACVs saw no substantial debris.



Damn!

Captain?

I wanted to kill them.



I wanted them dead by my hand.

Captain, you can't be serious.



It's a terrible thing to want!

Don't worry, I'm not keen on murder. But there is some satisfaction in killing the destroyers of my home.



And don't look at me like that.

This is a ship of war.

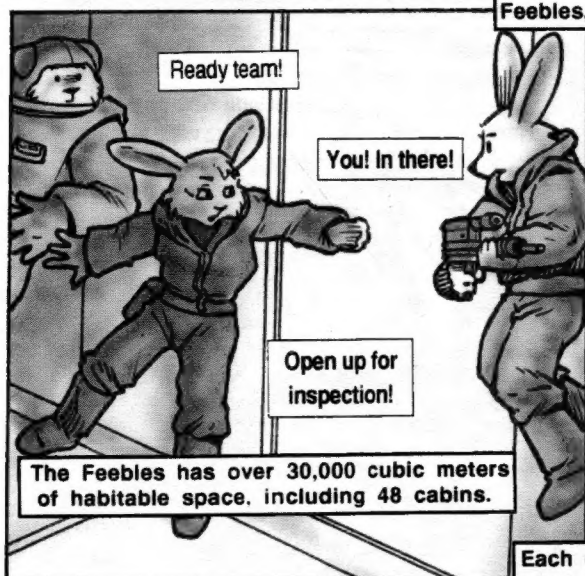
Raining terrible high-energy death upon our enemies is what we're here for.





I'm sorry, Captain, but I'm now ordered to inspect your ship in detail, including all passengers and their effects.

SD 201-03-01 Aboard the commercial starship Feebles, seized by an element of the ILR task force.



Ready team!

You! In there!

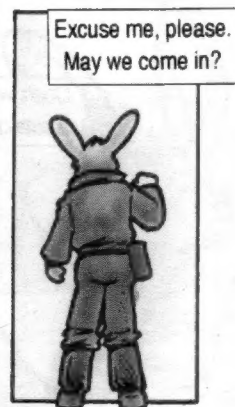
Open up for inspection!

The Feebles has over 30,000 cubic meters of habitable space, including 48 cabins.



Hello? Inspection, please.

Each cabin takes the better part of an hour to search.

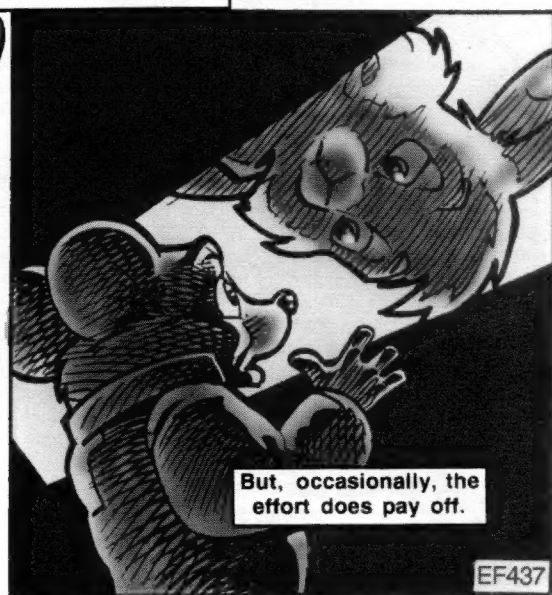


Excuse me, please. May we come in?

\*sigh\*



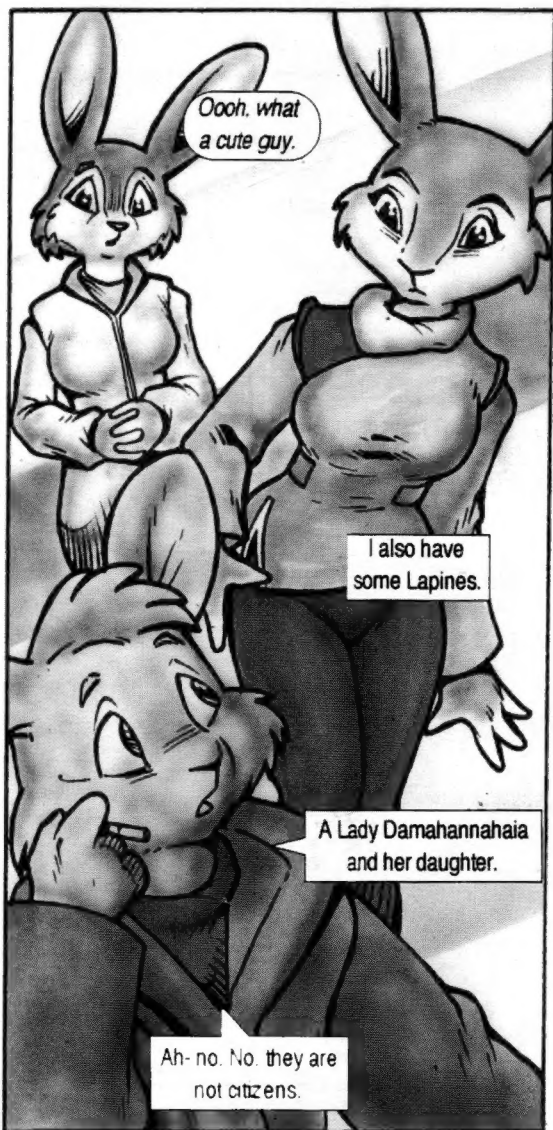
Mostly, they only find frightened passengers.



But, occasionally, the effort does pay off.



Captain, I've got some pasengers of interest, including an obvious EDF officer and possibly other EDF or Confed.



Oooh. what a cute guy.

I also have some Lapines.

A Lady Damahannahaia and her daughter.

Ah- no. No. they are not citizens.



Hello, Mr. Tankannahai.

Lieutenant! What do you intend to do with us?

I'm sorry M'Lady, but I don't yet have instructions from my captain.



Temannah, I won't have you associating with Republican rabble.

Lieutenant! Found this fellow. He's a citizen, with travel documents.

Dannahanni, sir.

There should be no problems, Citizen. Just stay calm and out of the way.

'Scuse me -chomp-

Thank you, sir. The "individuals of interest" are wondering what we might do with them.

Yes -

Phew! What a shift! But we checked out the ship as well as we're going to without stripping it down.

I am most satisfied with your performance, Lieutenant.

There were sealed contingency orders for this eventuality.

I would like you to now read them.

**Captain!** We can't do that! These are illegal orders!

Sir!? This can't be right!

Execute any captured Confeds? And race-traitors? *Race-traitors?!*

I have to concur. Though authenticated, this cannot be the work of responsible command authority.



Awright, you, you're now guests of the Republic.

Oh, Hon. Captain, I'm so grateful for your service.



I trust you are aware of the circumstances you put yourself into?

Captain, this is citizen Dannahanni, in transit. He insisted on coming.



Oh, really?



Entirely, sir. Yet where else can a citizen be but ...

What vision is this?



Hello, Mr. Tankannahai.

There's that dreamy officer again.

She is beautiful! My heart sings at the sight! Oh, joyous day, we must be meant to be!

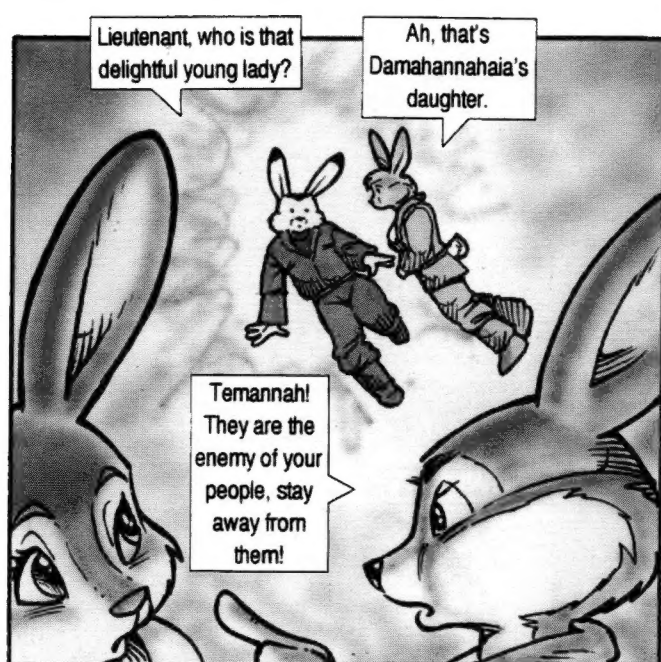


Permit me to introduce myself.



Temannah! Get over here!

What!? Oh, Sorry!



Lieutenant, who is that delightful young lady?

Ah, that's Damahannahaia's daughter.

Temannah! They are the enemy of your people, stay away from them!



What an enchanting vision.

Whatever you say, sir.

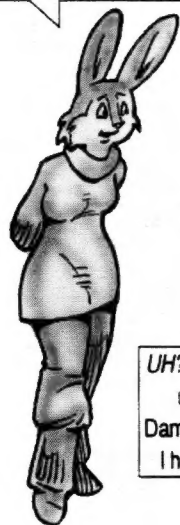


Hey, hey, Lieutenant! Interesting passengers, eh?

Yeah! Looks like the younger Damahannahaia has an eye for Republican officers.

uhmm - Lady Damahannahaia and her daughter are dedicated Confed and have no use for us "Republican Rabble".

Excuse me, Officer of Engineers Tankannahai, may I join you?



UH?! Oh, sorry - uh - Lady Damahannahaia. I have duties!

When will you be available?

I'm not - I mean, I have a lot of work.

But!

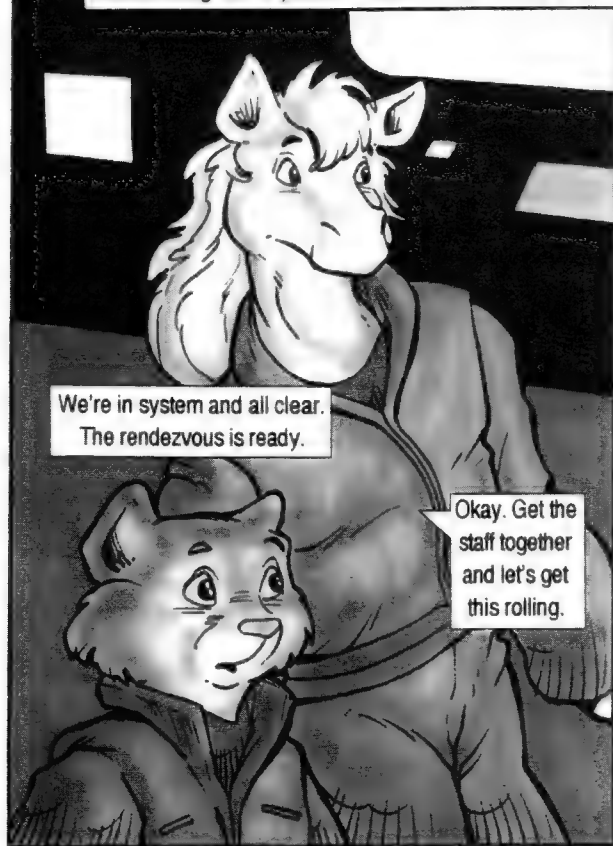
Sorry, Ma'am.

Must be a rabble rouser!

Oh, Lieutenant!

Careful, Officer of Engineers, all this fraternization.

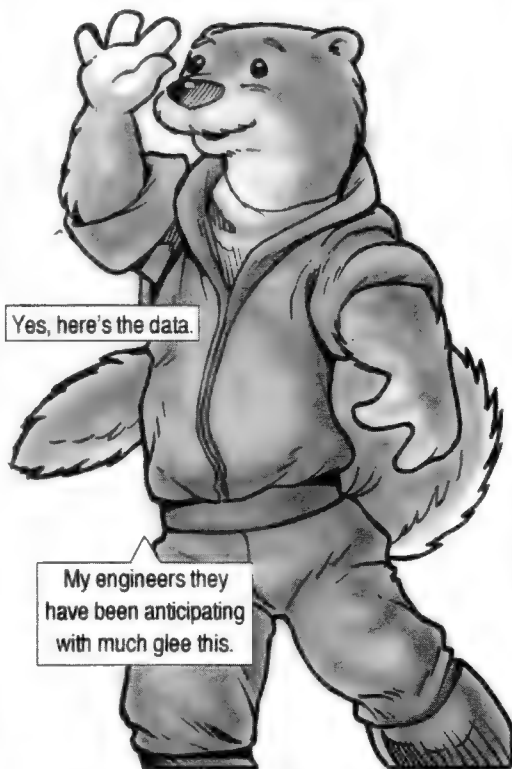
SD 201-03-05 Enchawa Corporation starship Echunnah, functioning as a patrol vessel on the rim of known space.



We're in system and all clear.  
The rendezvous is ready.

Okay. Get the  
staff together  
and let's get  
this rolling.

Ah. Captain. The big  
project it is coming?



Yes, here's the data.

My engineers they  
have been anticipating  
with much glee this.

As you can see, we'll be  
getting a special ACV section

Is simple enough, eh?  
But big classification?



I'll have more on that later,  
but do take it seriously. Now  
get your team going on it.



Ah! All is here. Have  
big conversion.

New hull section. New  
combat protocols.

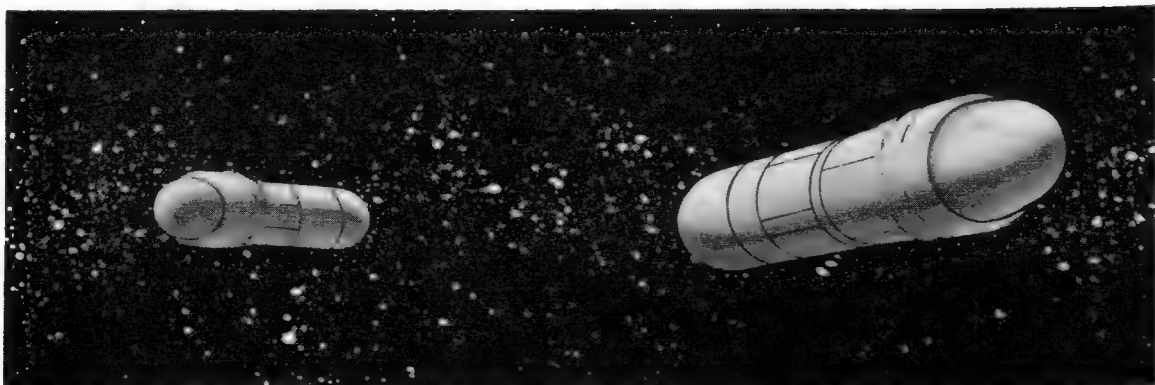
Changes!

Oboy! Changes!

Even security.

Ohno! Changes!

EF442



Alright, people, here are the  
EDF reps of our joint venture

I'd like you to connect with your department  
counterparts and get them integrated .

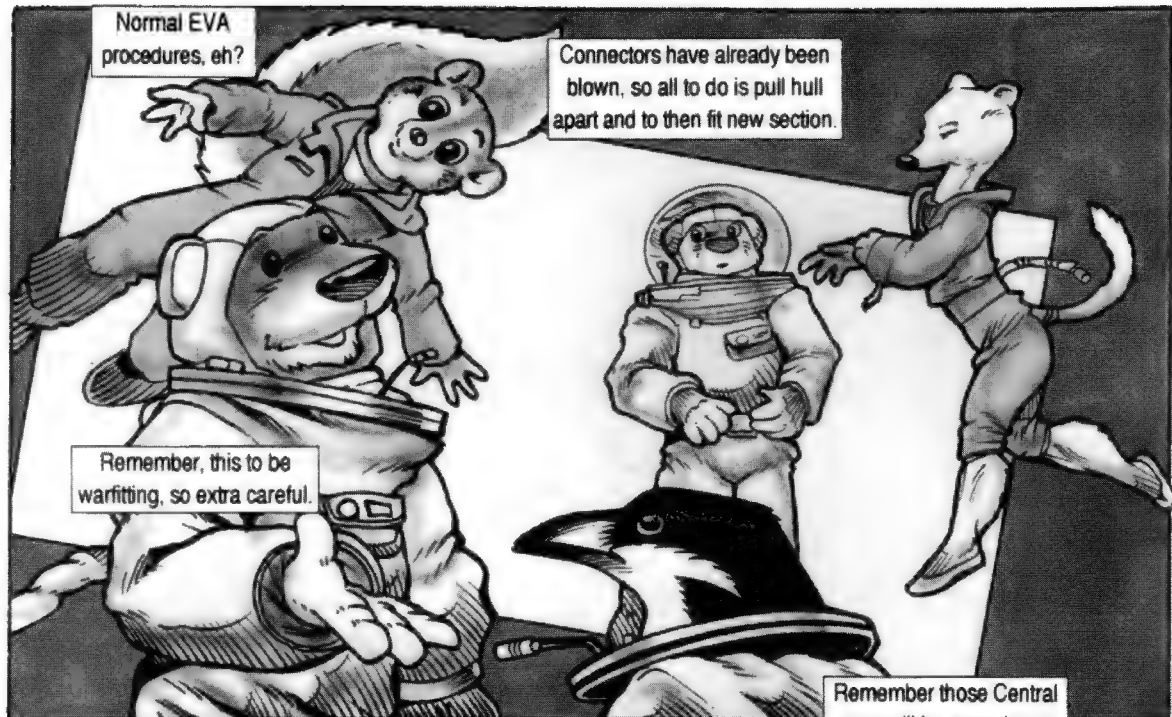
That would include quarters. We  
need to be a coordinated unit ASAP.

Excuse me, Captain,  
but we would prefer  
separate quarters.

Ah - . Why?  
May I ask?

Your crew includes individuals proven  
to be hostile to Confed authority.

So, for reasons of security,  
we prefer to be kept isolated.



Normal EVA  
procedures, eh?

Connectors have already been  
blown, so all to do is pull hull  
apart and to then fit new section.

Remember, this to be  
warfitting, so extra careful.

Remember those Central  
guys will be snooping at  
every turn, so by the book.



Very interesting,  
these big ACVs.

Yes - And the less attention  
you give them the better.

So, what are we suppose  
to do with them?

They have their own combat  
protocols and will let us know  
when they are good and ready.



You're kidding, right?

Don't I wish.

Does that mean we won't have  
to deal with *Them*, once  
everything's hooked up?

That's what I'm told.

Teka, I've got the animation going on my end.

Great! Let me start my action program.



Sharda! Sharda!  
Come see!

Post 8 on break.

You're clear, 8.



Yes, Lady Teka?

We put together a  
little show. See?



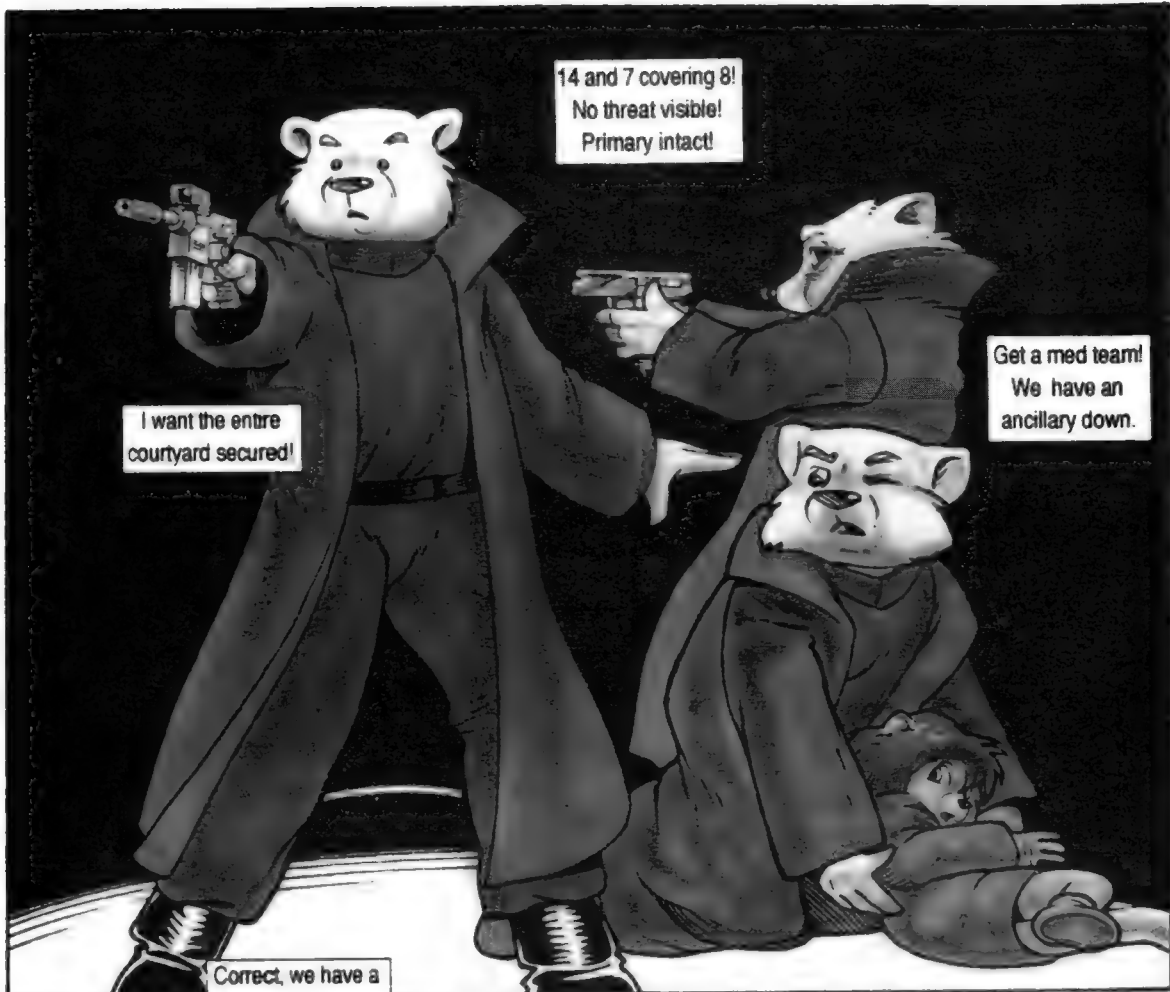
OOPH! Shots fired!

Get down!

YIPE!

SCREAM!



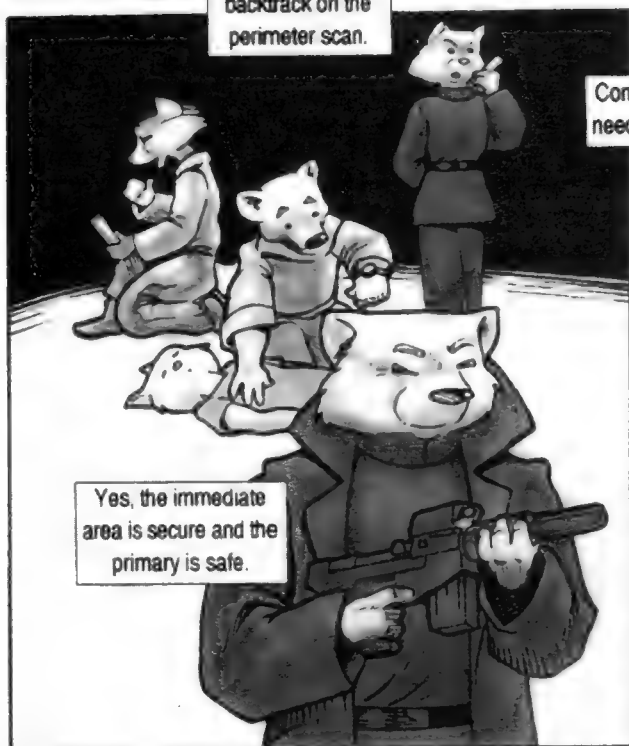


14 and 7 covering 8!  
No threat visible!  
Primary intact!

I want the entire  
courtyard secured!

Get a med team!  
We have an  
ancillary down.

Correct, we have a  
backtrack on the  
perimeter scan.



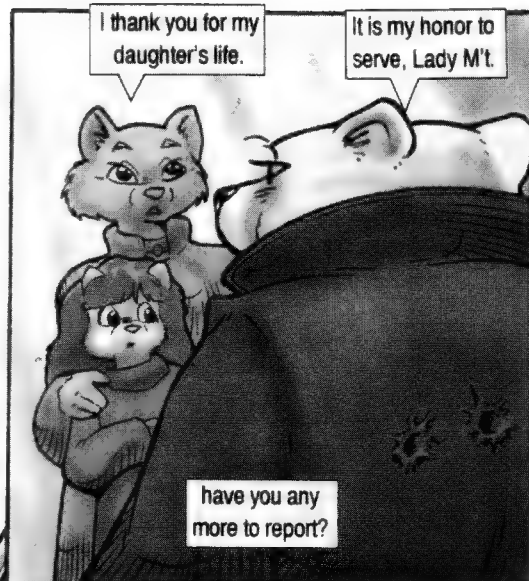
Come, Lady Teka, we  
need to get you inside.

Yes, the immediate  
area is secure and the  
primary is safe.



Is Moda hurt bad?

Not too bad.  
Now please,  
inside, M'Lady.

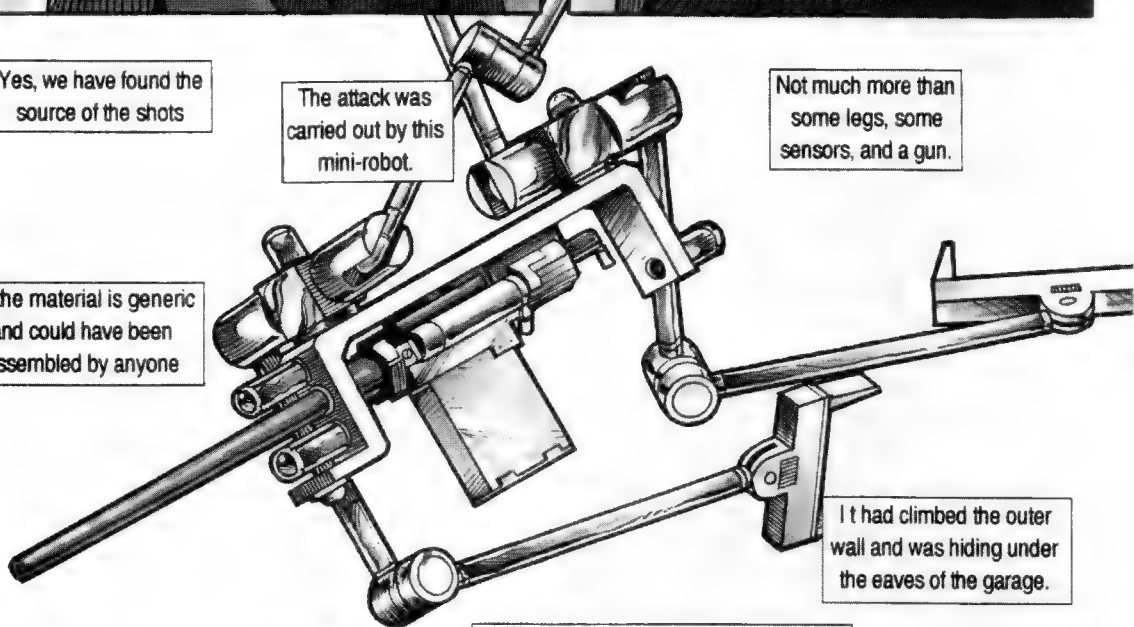


Yes, we have found the source of the shots

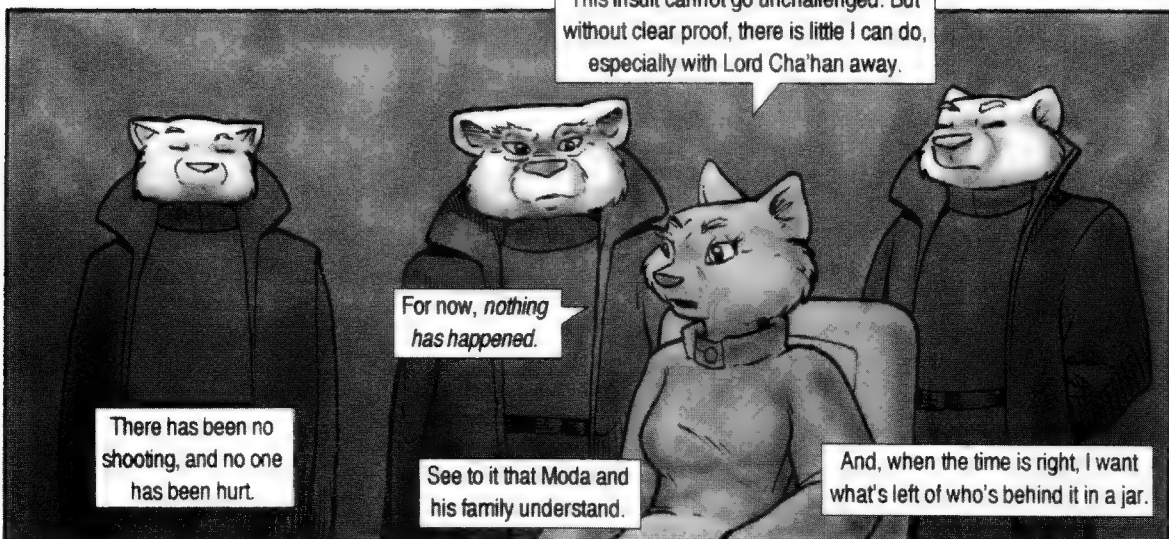
The attack was carried out by this mini-robot.

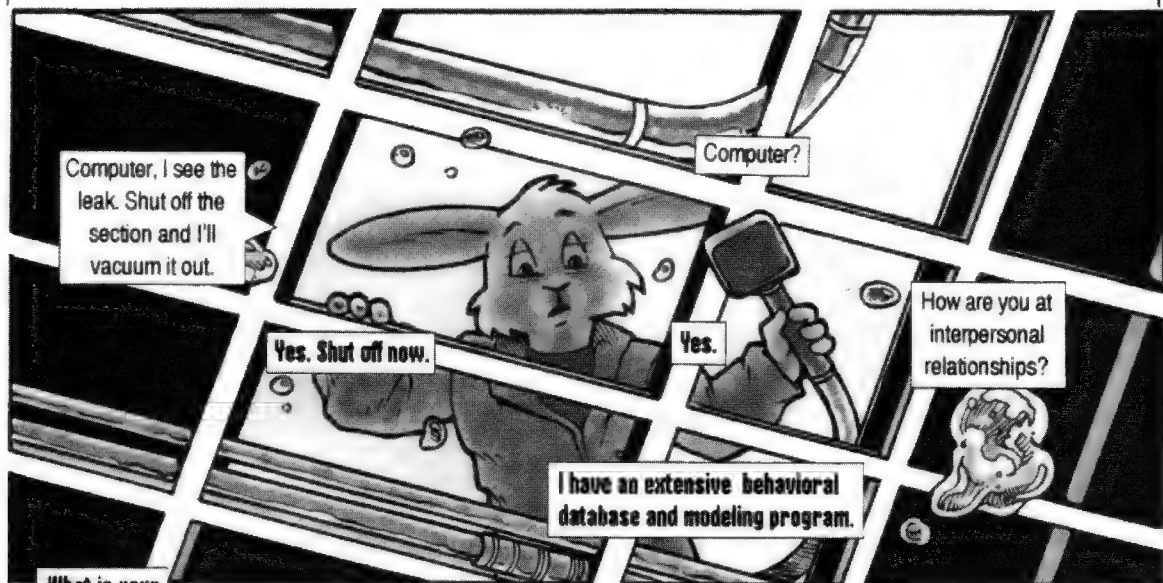
Not much more than some legs, some sensors, and a gun.

All the material is generic and could have been assembled by anyone



This insult cannot go unchallenged. But without clear proof, there is little I can do, especially with Lord Cha'h'an away.





Computer, I see the leak. Shut off the section and I'll vacuum it out.

Computer?

Yes. Shut off now.

Yes.

How are you at interpersonal relationships?

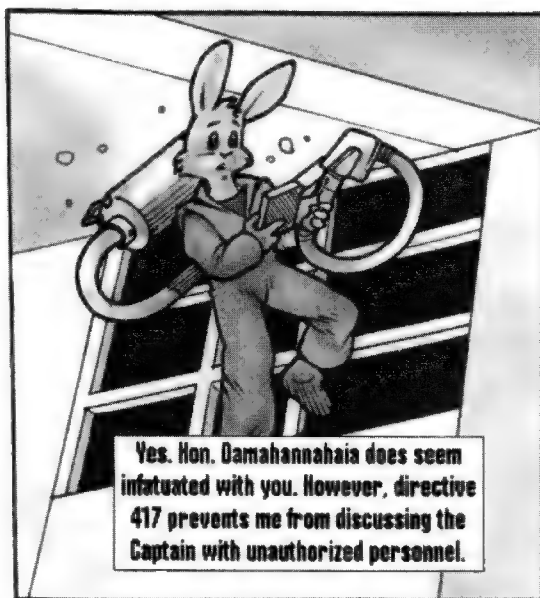
I have an extensive behavioral database and modeling program.

What is your question?

What am I going to do with Temannah?



And the Captain seems to be going all gaga over her.



Yes. Hon. Damahannahaia does seem infatuated with you. However, directive 417 prevents me from discussing the Captain with unauthorized personnel.

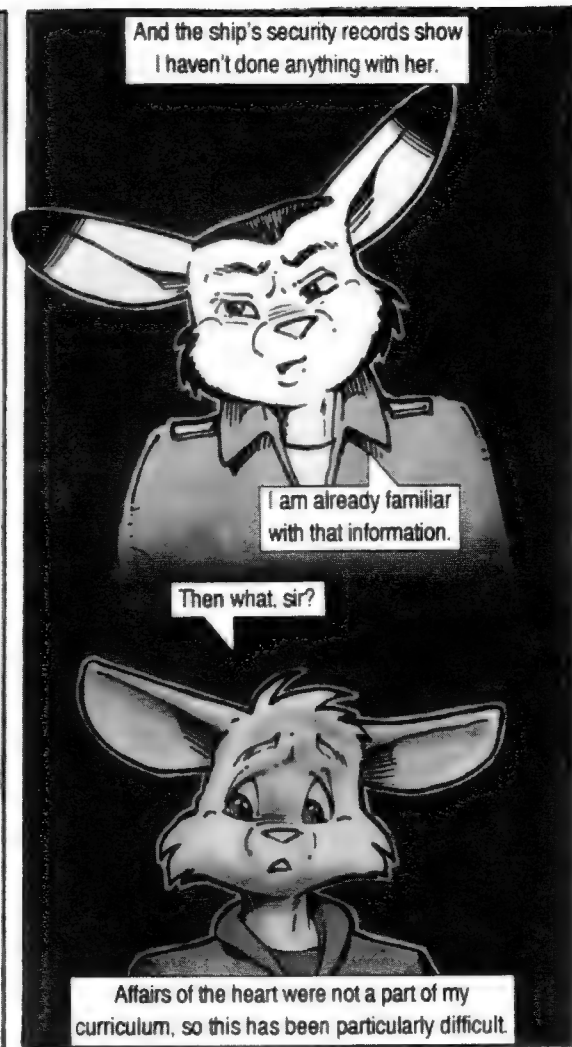
Oh, that's right. Sorry. Anything I can do about her though?



Your best hope is that she will find another to focus on.

And that it will be the Captain.





SD 201-03-10 Secret deep  
space Enchawa laboratory.

You're here late.

Couldn't sleep. I  
keep thinking about  
these things.

What they might do.  
What we might do  
with them.

Analysis suggests that they are  
configuring for replication.

Replication, really?

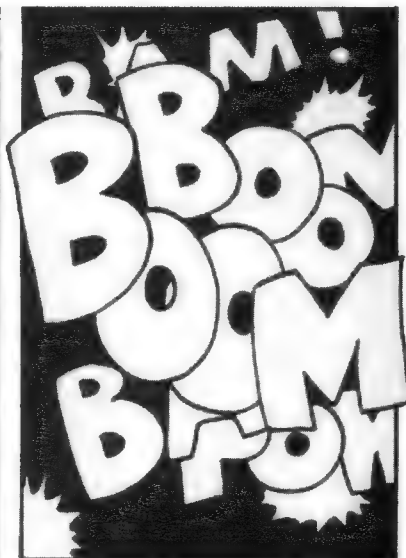
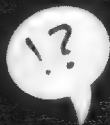
What would they use  
for raw materials?

I don't know.

I still can't believe I've got this level of  
access after all the objections from Confed.

Having Enchawa affiliation  
does have its rewards.

Keeping me alive and allowing me the  
professional opportunity of a lifetime.





Ugh! Computer!  
I'm still here!

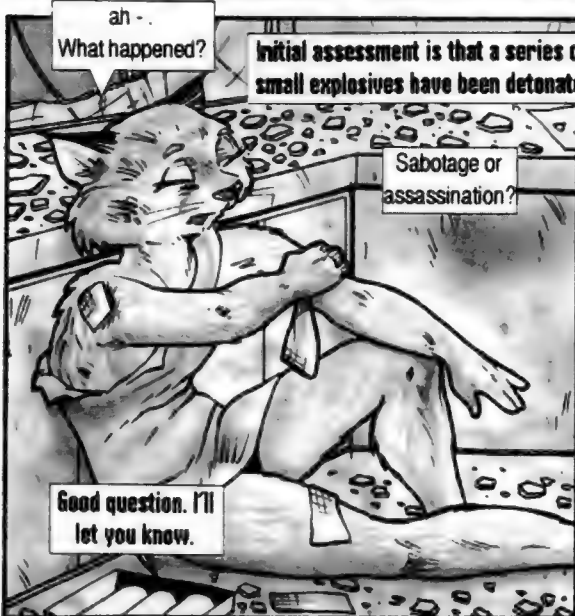
I do not have visual.  
Are you badly injured?

I don't think anything  
major is missing.

Aid is not immediate. The containment has  
been breached and you are contaminated.

The nanites?

Yes. They have  
been dispersed.



ah -  
What happened?

Initial assessment is that a series of  
small explosives have been detonated.

Sabotage or  
assassination?

Good question. I'll  
let you know.



Dr. Kalihahai! Are  
you all right?

Tutaun, I'm more or  
less in one piece.

We'll need special security on  
this. And the containment team.

Oh no, the  
specimens!



Yes. They are all over  
the place, and on me.

I guess we'll get to  
see how they perform  
in a host after all.

You may be right.  
the explosion  
pattern had only a  
low order chance  
of - beep!



Beep! A special file  
has just opened. I  
now have a nanite  
control program.

So, that's it, the  
final proof. We are all  
Creator artifacts.

This is a special  
program, please stand  
by for nanite interface.

# Making Sound

A slice of life among the avant garde

Nope, I don't see it.

Problems, Maria?

This composition just isn't coming together right.

Inks - Shon Howell Script, pencils, tone - S.A. Gallacci  
c 1996 S.A. Gallacci, from his 1982 story idea

I want to evoke more passion, but don't want to get too obvious about it.

I know you don't like it - but you *could* use a psych model with the 'puter.



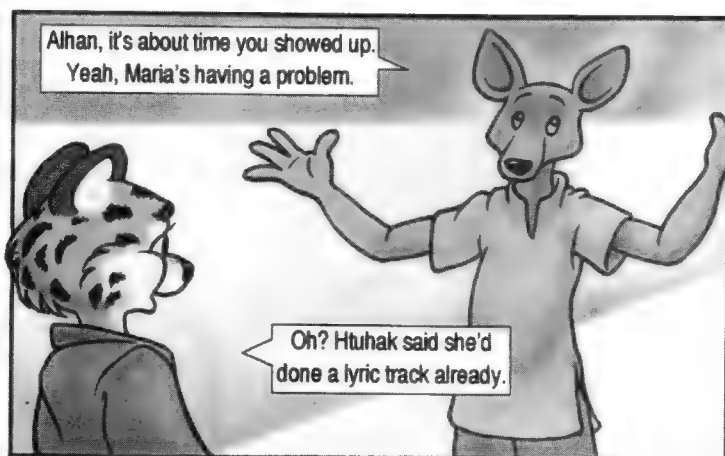
I could, but then I'd be just like the rest of the noise-hackers.

Doing this ourselves is why we have any subscribers at all.

But unless you can get it together right away, you'll miss your deadline - *again*.

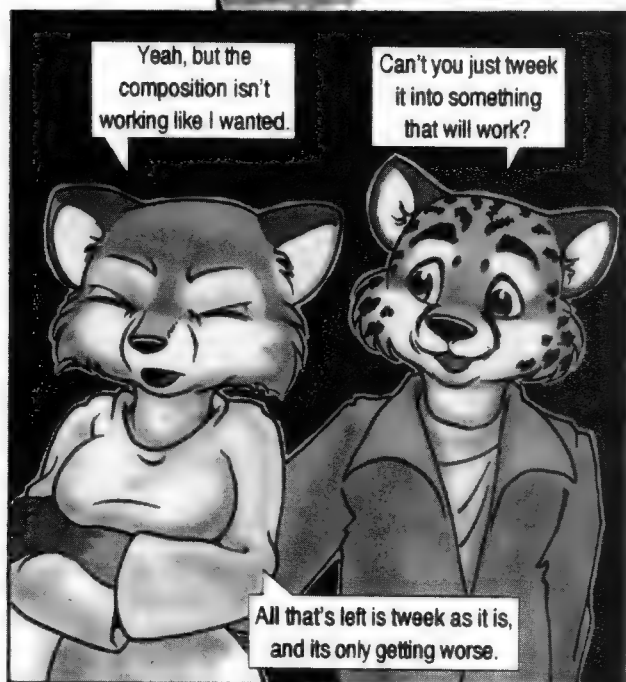


Okay, who's been saying dirty words, like *deadlines*?



Alhan, it's about time you showed up. Yeah, Maria's having a problem.

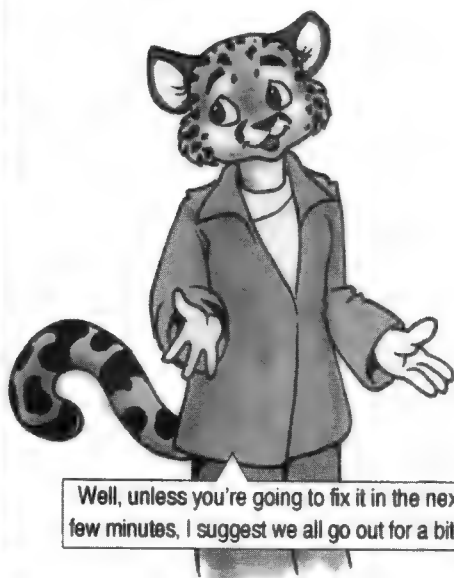
Oh? Htuhak said she'd done a lyric track already.



Yeah, but the composition isn't working like I wanted.

Can't you just tweek it into something that will work?

All that's left is tweek as it is, and its only getting worse.



Well, unless you're going to fix it in the next few minutes, I suggest we all go out for a bite.





What's that?

Uhm?

The rhythm -  
The tempo.



The out-of-balance  
blower fan?

You got a pad?!  
I've got to get that!



Record and NetLink  
to my work station.

Superimpose this input  
on work track 883.

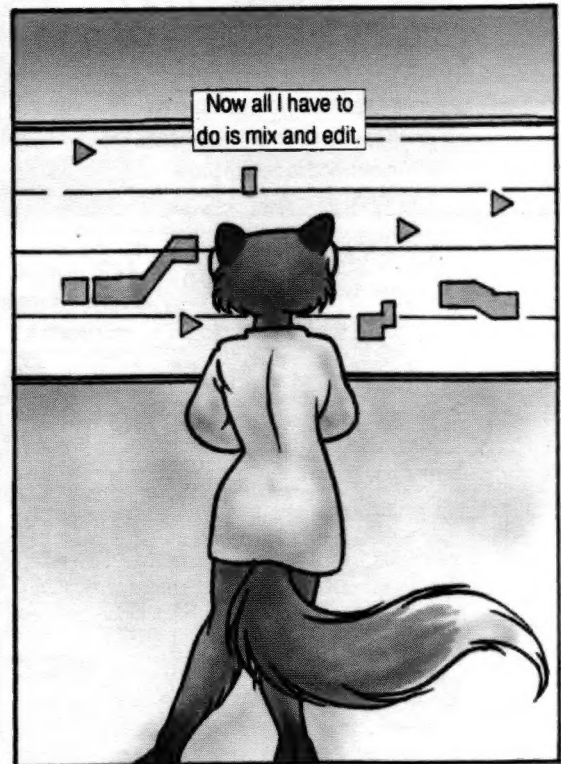
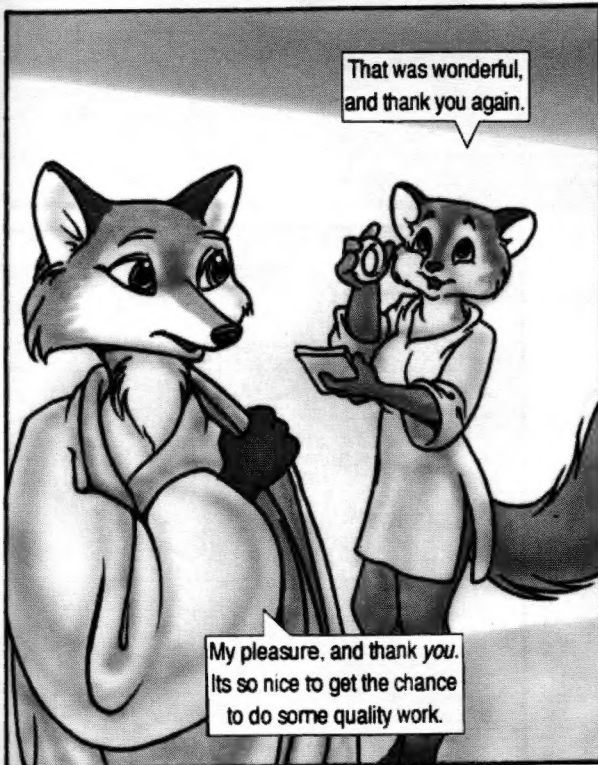
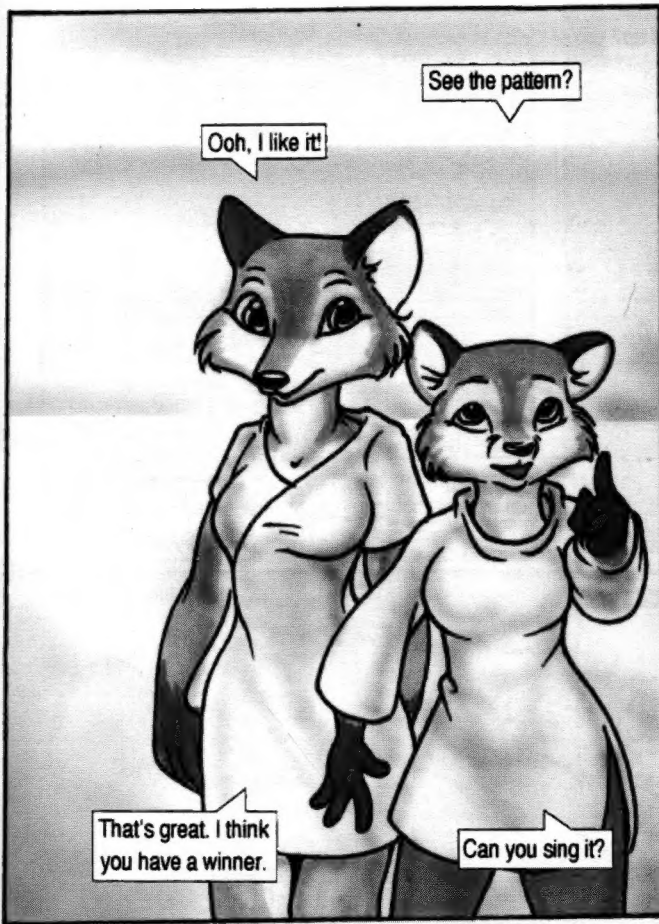


I like it.  
I like it *alot!*

Can you call Htuhak and  
get her over for a session?



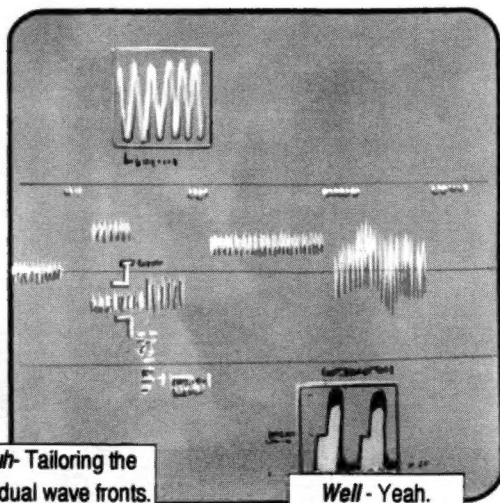
I thing I really got  
something!





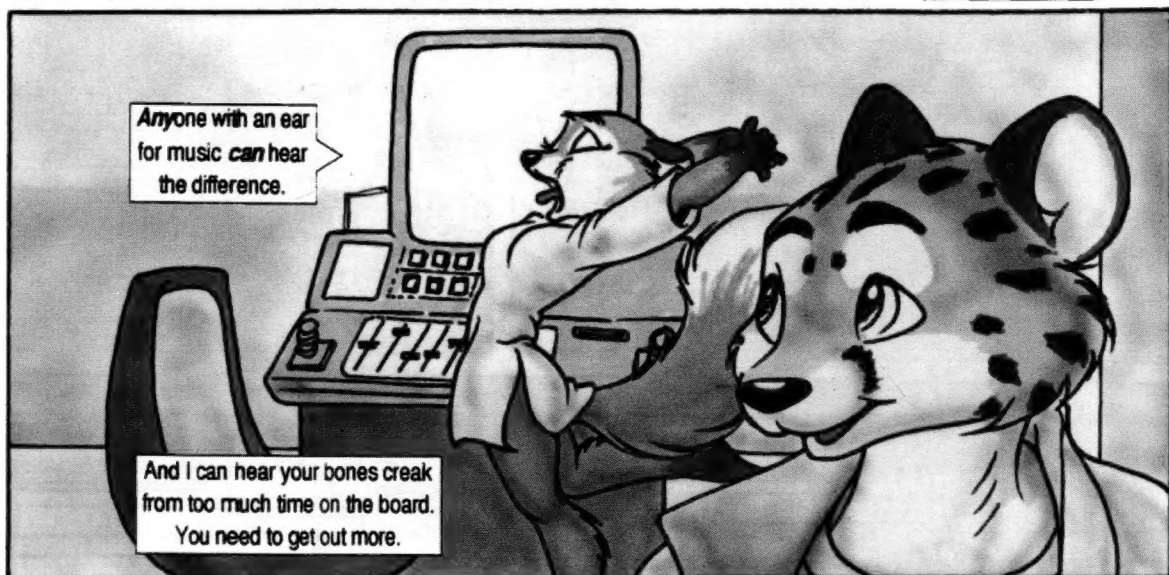
You still up?

Taking care  
of the details.



Ahuh- Tailoring the  
individual wave fronts.

Well - Yeah.  
What's your point?



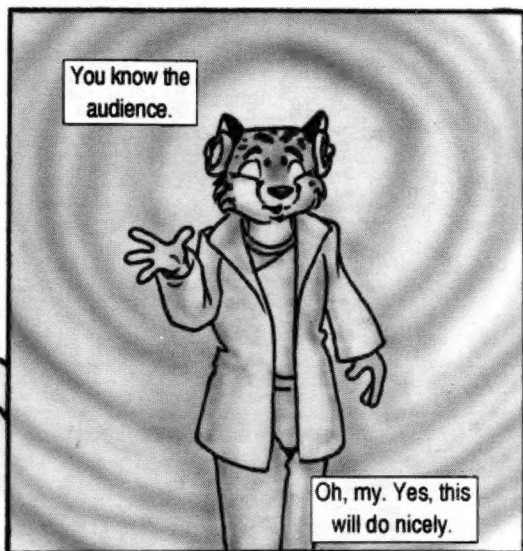
Anyone with an ear  
for music *can* hear  
the difference.

And I can hear your bones creak  
from too much time on the board.  
You need to get out more.



Awh! Listen to  
this and tell me it  
isn't worth it.

Hey! I'm no audio  
artist, what do I know?

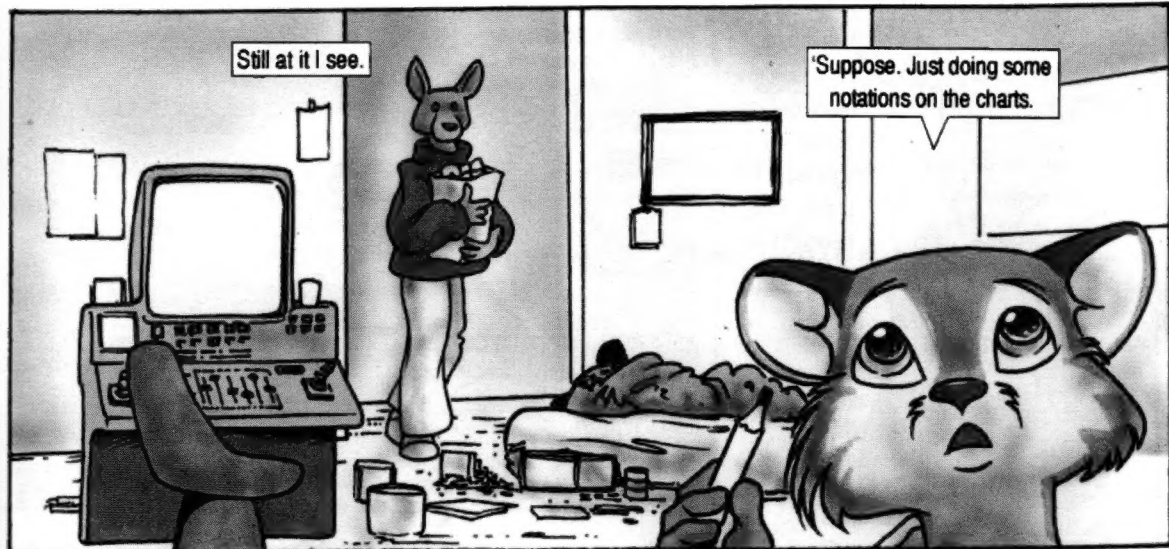


You know the  
audience.

Oh, my. Yes, this  
will do nicely.

Still at it I see.

'Suppose. Just doing some notations on the charts.



Dead already.

Yeah, some people just have no stamina.



Ah, food. Did you bring crunchy bars?

Is it done?



I dunno. It sounds okay.



-buharumf- Oh, its you. How long?

Its the morning of the 15th.

